

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 003891

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/21/2015

TAGS: PGOV KWBG SOCI IS GAZA DISENGAGEMENT GOI INTERNAL

SUBJECT: GAZA DISENGAGEMENT: RIBBONS SHOW ISRAELIS' TRUE  
COLORS ON DISENGAGEMENT

Classified By: Political Counselor Norman Olsen for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

1. (SBU) In recent months, some Israeli motorists who oppose Prime Minister Sharon's disengagement plan have taken to tying orange ribbons on their vehicles to denote their opposition. Up until about a week ago, orange was the only color streaming from car -- and truck -- antennas, bumpers and door handles. Not so today. Some disengagement supporters have started streaming blue ribbons from their cars, and Peace Now Director Yariv Oppenheimer told Poloff June 20 he had little time to talk, as he was busy launching a formal blue ribbon pro-disengagement campaign. The anti-disengagement movement has been for two months visible, with bumper stickers, billboards, and roadside banners in noticeable numbers on the main highways. In Jerusalem, home to a large number of religious Jews who support the settlements, anti-disengagement banners are pervasive. Oppenheimer hopes to change that.

2. (C) Oppenheimer said he has 100,000 blue ribbons to distribute over the next two weeks, and 500,000 in total, through a grass-roots campaign to show support for disengagement. In response to Poloff's question whether people may decide not to display blue ribbons out of fear that fervent disengagement opponents might vandalize their cars, Oppenheimer assessed that most disengagement supporters will display the ribbons regardless. He noted that if they are afraid of vandalism, they can remove the ribbon once they park their cars. "To be silent," Oppenheimer stressed, "is the most terrible thing to do. It means you don't care."

3. (SBU) Oppenheimer has only several weeks to make progress on his campaign before leaving it in other activists' hands as he will be leaving for two-and-a-half weeks of military reserve service beginning July 17. He made the news June 15 when word go out to the press that the left-wing peacenik will perform his reserve duty guarding settlement outposts in the southern Etzion bloc. He will serve with a battalion that will replace a regular Israel Defense Forces (IDF) unit that will participate in the evacuation of settlements in Gaza. Oppenheimer told Poloff, as he had told Ma'ariv, that he is "happy to be going to help the cause of disengagement."

\*\*\*\*\*

Visit Embassy Tel Aviv's Classified Website:

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>

You can also access this site through the State Department's  
Classified SIPRNET website.

\*\*\*\*\*

KURTZER